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News

BRIEFS

Guatemala

A Guatemalan terrorist group, the Guerrilla Army of the Poor, kidnaped El Salvador's ambassador to Guatemala on Sunday. The incident coincided with the annual meeting of the Interamerican Development Bank—held this year in Guatemala City—and the kidnapers demanded that a "communique" be read at the meeting.

Because the hostage is a foreign official and the initial demand of the kidnapers was modest, the Guatemalan government departed from its usual hard-line approach toward dealing with terrorists and allowed the text to be read.

The group, the most active Guatemalan guerrilla band in recent years, has carried out kidnapings, robberies, assassinations, and the destruction of sugar cane fields.

Senior Guatemalan officials reportedly decided yesterday to wait until after the IDB session ends on Thursday before launching a roundup of suspected members of the guerrilla group if the ambassador is still being held then.

The ambassador is the second Salvadoran official to be kidnaped in two months. A Salvadoran terrorist group kidnaped El Salvador's foreign minister in April and murdered him on May 11, after the Salvadoran government had refused to release 37 political prisoners.

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